



For Immediate Release

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Florida Legislature Passes Balanced Budget with \$1.5 Billion for Education, Increased Funding for a Stronger Safety Net and State Reserves

Tallahassee, Fla.— Today, the Florida Legislature passed a fiscally responsible, balanced budget that funds key priorities without increasing the burden of government on Floridians and responsibly prepares for potential future economic uncertainty. The 2013-2014 state budget is highlighted by an increase of \$1.5 billion in new K-12 education funding, which includes pay raises for teachers and additional funding for merit pay. Additionally, the approved budget provides pay raises for state and university employees, increases funding to serve our most vulnerable populations such as the elderly, the disabled and citizens in need of mental health and substance abuse treatment, and adds \$2.8 billion into reserves.

“The biggest winners in the 2013 budget are teachers and students as we have prioritized funding for education and increased funding to give Florida’s teachers a raise. This budget demonstrates our continued commitment to providing a quality education for our children, rewarding hard working teachers and state employees, strengthening the safety net for our most vulnerable citizens and growing Florida’s economy,” said House Speaker Will Weatherford (R-Wesley Chapel).

“Throughout the budget process we sought to prioritize funding in the best interest of all Floridians, and this final product reflects that. With a budget surplus for the first time in several years and the opportunity to provide additional funding for key services, this budget makes significant investments in our education system, our teachers and state employees and our health care safety net, while continuing to keep taxes low for our citizens and setting aside sufficient funds into reserves,” said House Appropriations Chairman Seth McKeel (R-Lakeland).



Representative Steve Precourt, Majority Leader

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Highlights of the 2013-2014 General Appropriations Act:

Total House Recommended Budget: \$74.5 billion

- General Revenue Funds: \$26.8 billion
- State Trust Funds: \$21.2 billion
- Federal Funds: \$26.4 billion
- Provides an across the board \$1,400 per year salary increase for State and University employees making less than \$40,000 per year and \$1,000 for employees making more than \$40,000. Additionally, one time merit bonuses of up to \$600 will be available for employees (no more than 35% of agency employees) based on performance.
- Also provides an additional 3% pay increase above the \$1,400 pay raise for all state law enforcement officers and an additional 2% increase for employees who have served 5 years or more.
- Sets aside \$480 million for teacher pay increases to be distributed by local school boards.
- Fully funds the unfunded actuarial liability and normal cost of the Florida Retirement System Plan for State and University employees.
- Adds \$2.8 billion to Reserves.

PreK-12 Education

- **Increase of \$1.5 billion dollars (7.7 percent):** Total budget of \$20.3 billion.
- **Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP):** Total funds are increased by \$1.05 billion to \$18.3 billion. The funds per student are increased 6.34%, which is \$404.04 per student. Includes:
 - An increase to the teacher supplies program from \$200 to \$250 per teacher
 - An increase of \$10 million to the Sparsity Allocation
 - \$296.9 million for the UAL and FRS normal costs
 - \$30 million for Career Education Industry Certifications
 - \$15 million for Cyber Security/Digital Arts Recognition/Digital Tools Certification for Elementary and Middle School Students
 - \$3 million for ESE Technology Applications
 - **PLUS \$480 million for districts to award salary increases for instructional personnel**
 - Provides merit pay increases of up to \$2,500 for “effective” teachers and up to \$3,500 for “highly effective” teachers.

Higher Education

- **State University System:** There is an increase in state funding of \$241.6 million from the base budget.
 - The authorized 3 percent tuition increase generates \$21.6 million for the State University System.



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- The University of Florida received an additional \$15 million for implementing **the Institute for Online Learning**, the first fully accredited, state research university online baccalaureate degree program in the nation.
- **Florida College System:** There is an increase in state funding for the Florida College System of \$67.9 million from the base budget.
 - The authorized tuition increase generates \$26.4 million for the Florida College System.
 - Also provided for \$5.0 Million for performance based incentive funding for Industry Certifications in targeted occupational areas.
- **Workforce:** Authorizes 3 percent tuition increase for Workforce Education programs, which generates approximately \$1.2 million for Workforce Education.
- **Student Financial Assistance:** \$9 million in additional funds were provided to increase scholarship award levels by 3 percent.

Healthcare

- **Medicaid Price Level and Workload Adjustment:** \$996.3 M total, \$32.9 M GR – Additional funding for increased Medicaid caseloads and price level adjustments as agreed upon by the February 2013 Social Service Estimating Conference for an anticipated additional 95,018 Medicaid beneficiaries. No category of Medicaid eligibility is eliminated or reduced. No provider rates are reduced below current fiscal year levels.
- **Florida Kid Care Enrollment Increase:** (\$3.0) M, (\$3.2) M GR – Provides funding for the 2013-14 anticipated growth in the Kidcare Program. Funding is expected to serve an additional 6,899 children, a 2.4% enrollment growth rate over the projected enrollment for current year.
- **Resources to address the APD Medicaid Waiver Waitlist:** \$24.2 M total, \$10.0 M GR – Provides funding to increase those served on the Medicaid Home and Community Based Services Waiver by approximately 750. An additional \$40.2 million (\$17.0 million GR) is also provided for the 2012-13 Fiscal Year to cover carry forward deficits.
- **Funding for Additional Elder Waiver Slots:** \$35.1 M total, \$16.7 M GR – Funding to provide an additional 2,611 individuals in the community based care diversion programs including nursing home diversion, Aged and Disabled Waiver, and Community Care for the Elderly Program. This funding will serve 5.4% of individuals currently waiting for services. Additionally funds 325 additional PACE slots in Lee, Hillsborough, Palm Beach, and Broward counties.
- **Overall Increase to Substance Abuse and Mental Health Funding:** \$18.3 M, \$23.2 M GR – represents a 3.16% increase over FY 2012-13
- **Restoration of Nonrecurring Funds:** \$53.8 M, \$36.8 M GR
 - \$2.0 million Healthy Families Program
 - \$1.1 million children's substance abuse services
 - \$4.9 million community adult substance abuse services
 - \$3.9 million children's mental health services
 - \$10.2 million community adult mental health services
 - \$8.1 million support for regional and circuit administration
 - \$20.6 million maintenance adoption subsidies (MAS)



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- \$3.0 million adult community mental health - County Criminal Justice Grants

Transportation and Economic Development

- \$10.9 billion budget which maintains both our economic development activities and our state's transportation infrastructure.
- Safety and security were preserved: no loss of sworn law enforcement officers (Florida Highway Patrol)
- Doubles the funding for the Guard Tuition Assistance program with \$3.5 million, and provides \$15 million for Armory renovations.
- Economic Development is funded at \$198.4 million, which is comparable to historic funding averages of approximately \$199 million.
 - Within these resources, \$45.5M is provided to the Governor so he can best utilize economic incentives to take advantage of emerging trends and opportunities that promote job growth and business opportunities around the state.
 - Visit Florida's budget was increased from \$54 million to \$63.5 million in an effort to promote our state's vital tourism industry through increased marketing and advertising. Additionally, Space Florida's budget was increased from \$10 million to \$19.5 million to further bolster the space and aerospace industry in our state.
- The budget increases funding for State Aid to Libraries at \$22.3 million and increases cultural and museum funding by 63% with \$8.5 million. Historic preservation grant programs are funded with an additional \$9.1 million, and restoration of historic properties at \$2.2 million.
- This budget fully funds the Transportation Work Program at \$8.5 billion.

Agriculture & Natural Resources

- **Beach Restoration \$37.5M total (\$15.1M GR)**—Financial assistance to local and state governments and special taxing authorities for beach and dune restoration.
- **Florida Forever \$70M (\$10M GR)**—Provides funding for conservation easements and purchase of conservation lands for springs and water resource protection and military buffering.
- **Everglades Restoration \$70M**— Provides funding for the Water Quality Plan (\$32M); Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (\$35M) and the Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Plan (\$3M).
- **Food Distribution \$1.7M (\$1.4M GR)**—Farm Share (\$1M) and Food Banks (\$700,000), which collect and distribute surplus food and grocery items to people in poverty or times of crisis.
- **Drinking Water and Wastewater Revolving Loan programs \$203.2M (\$12.5M GR)**—Financial assistance to local governments for the construction of drinking water systems and critical environmental infrastructure.
- **Lake Restoration \$4M TF**— Funds to conduct lake, river, and wetland aquatic habitat restoration and enhancement activities (\$2M); and restore Lake Apopka (\$2M).



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Justice

- Provides funding for the **Department of Corrections** for the increase in prison population, health services and funding to offset the departments' deficit. **(\$51.9M)**
- Provides funding for the increased criminal appeals workload and staffing for the **Statewide Prosecution Pill Mill Unit** in the Office of the Attorney General. **(\$1.4M)**
- Provides recurring funding to **Guardian Ad Litem** to increase the number of volunteers. **(\$3.8M)**
- Provides additional funding for operation support, case management, appellate backlog and funding to implement electronic filing for the **State Attorneys and Public Defenders**. **(\$4.3M)**
- **Department of Law Enforcement:** Increase of \$2.8 million in general revenue over the FY2012-13 Appropriation, 3.29% increase.
- Removes the clerks of court and the Corporation from the state budget. **(-\$445M)**

Government Operations

- **Florida Accountability Contract Tracking System (FACTS)** – \$713,167 for the support and maintenance of the CFO's FACTS initiative. The FACTS System once fully operational will maintain on a secure website all executive branch contracts.
- **One-Stop Business Registration Portal** - \$712,408 for Department of Revenue to continue the development and implementation of an Internet website that will provide individuals and businesses with a single point-of entry into state government for completing and submitting of documents required to transact business in Florida.
- **Fiscally Constrained Counties** - \$24.0 million. This issue provides funding for counties to off-set the reductions in ad valorem tax revenue as a result of State Constitutional Amendments approved by voters in 2008.

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